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Title of the project

Gender Based Social Expectations: An analysis of the role of textbooks in primary school

An Honors Society Project

Gerta Ymeri

Advisor: Venera Demukaj, PhD

Second Reader: Edona Maloku, PhD candidate

July 2020

Abstract

This project analyzes the presence of gender stereotypes in the textbooks used in elementary school, with a special focus on the literature used for children in the first up to the fifth grade. This study is mainly focused on gender stereotypical signs in texts and illustrations on areas such as family roles, physical appearance, generic nouns and pronouns, and professions. It further showcases the impact that these textbooks, specifically women and men representation have on children on their future endeavors. The study represents existing evidence in Kosovo, including information on Kosovar education, legal framework, and similar research to this project. Research for this project was conducted by a combination of primary and secondary data. The secondary data was gathered from different sources; whereas, the primary data was gathered through semi-structured interviews as well as small scale experiments. The results gathered confirm that social expectations based on gender are present and they cover a great portion of space in school textbooks. The existing gender stereotypes in school textbooks play an important role on child development and enforcement of these stereotypes in the society overall.

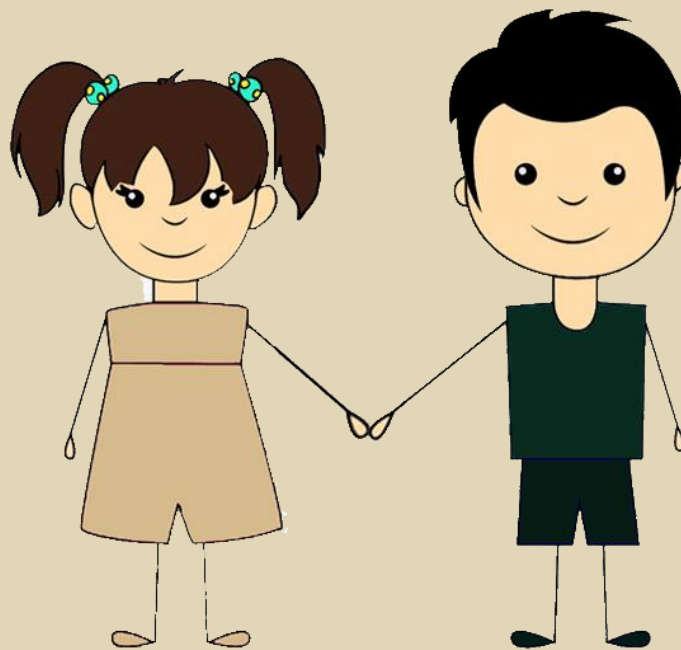


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To my best friends- you are my second family and my lifelong bond. You know who you are!

Last, but certainly not the least, I stand here today, beyond grateful for my family who has supported me during these 22 years of existence. I dedicate my past, my present and my future to the people who have always been my greatest supporters and critics. To my father- Gazmend, my mother- Burbuqe, my brother- Jon, you have paved the way to my success and without you, this would have never been possible.

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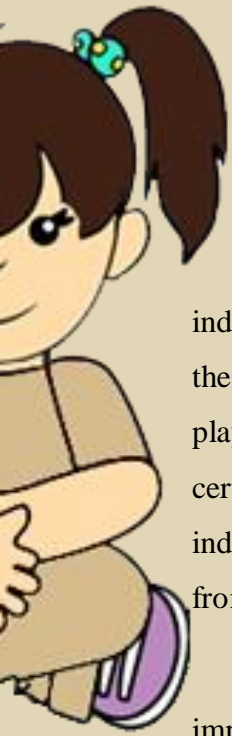
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¹ Original name in Albanian: Qendra Kosovare për Studime Gjinore.



1. Introduction

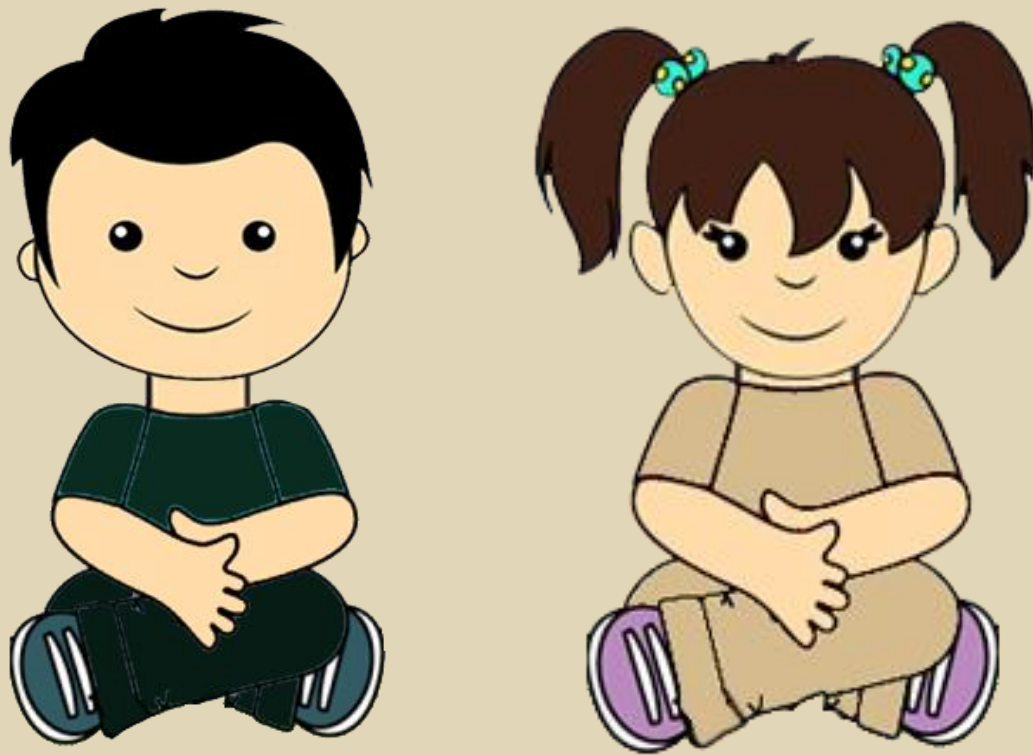
Education is a landmark period in a person's life and plays an important role in the way an individual shapes their character. Education is "any process, either formal or informal, that shapes the potential of a maturing organism (human being)" (Education, 2018). Meaning that, education plays a key role in shaping an individual's character; thus, making them act, feel, and behave in certain ways towards certain phenomena. To be able to clearly determine factors that push individuals in certain ways, one must look at the issues encompassing the growth of the person from the early stages of life.

Before elaborating on the issues related to education, one must firstly look at the most important phase of human life, namely education itself. "Education holds the power to form the understanding, attitudes and the behavior of individuals" (Masud, 2017). Per se, education forms the personality of an individual and shapes it based on the theories and lessons it offers since the early stages of human life. An important aspect of education are the textbooks used by teachers and professors. From the very first year of education, specifically the first grade, children start encountering stories, and visuals which are used for explaining certain topics. The textbooks used in schools include but are not limited to Natural Sciences, Civic Engagement, Albanian Language (which in Kosovo is the mother-tongue for ethnic majority group, Albanians), Mathematics and others. These textbooks shape children's beliefs and affect them through the use of texts and illustrations. The curriculums used in the schools of Kosovo, set up the requirements and specifications of what is prerequisite from the author, meaning the topics that need to be elaborated. All of these requirements from the authors play a key role in the representation of different topics; thus, leading to different issues that need to be tackled accordingly.

One of the well-known problems of today's modern world arising from education, especially the curriculum used in elementary schools is gender stereotyping (M. Niaz Asadullah, 2018). Hence, gender stereotyping is the set of expectations imposed by society on a person based on the gender one is identified with (Ford, 2014). There are two types of stereotypes, "cultural ones- representing community beliefs and individual stereotypes- representing individual association of a person for a social group" (Vu, 2008). The problem with gender stereotyping is that this phenomenon imposes certain kinds of behavior on people based on their gender.



Especially in countries, such as Kosovo where the gender roles are quite rigid and norms that strict the issue of gender stereotyping becomes more troublesome. This behavior is continuously seen in the private and public spheres, where men and women have been subject to discrimination based on their preferences which are considered to be against social expectations. These expectations represented in the textbooks impose and create a division between appropriate professions for men and women; make a gender-based distinction of colors; determines the appropriate outfit based on gender and sometimes even uses derogatory language and illustrations while portraying men and/or women. Researchers determine that gender stereotypes take an amazingly huge portion of textbooks in multiple countries (Camera, 2016). This is a worldwide problem and covers countries all over the world, including Kosovo. The reason behind such issues lies in the fact that there is little to no supervision on the curriculum approval (Camera, 2016). Simultaneously leading to internalization of gender stereotypes in the individuals' behavior; thus affecting the society as a whole.



2. The scope of the research

This research is focused on the analysis of textbooks used in the first up to the fifth grade, with a special emphasis on the following texts: “Abetare”; “Albanian Language”; “Reading”; “Natural Sciences”; “Society and Environment”; and “Civic Education”². These books represent modern-world stories, past stories, social and cultural norms, as well as both men and women's position in society- but the issue is how the women are represented within that framework. When children are first introduced to these lessons they attach features on certain characters, where they get familiarized with what is right and wrong, good and bad behavior and so on. Afterward, children determine patterns and create their own hierarchy where they place personalities on different levels. Children aged 7 to 15 years old are more prone to understanding from visuals, as the illustrations and stories are more appealing to them; hence shaping their aspirations by gender-related stereotypes (Chatfield, 2019). This is why this research project focuses on primary schools (grade 1-5), specifically from 7 to 12 years old.



3. Research Questions

- How are men and women portrayed in the school textbooks?
- How did the curriculum change compared to previous education system and now?
- How do teachers address gender-stereotypical behavior in classrooms?

Thisis: In order to be able to understand gender-based social expectations and the impact it has on a child's growth, this project analyzes the root causes of such phenomena, through a thorough analysis of the mandatory textbooks used from the first to the fifth grade. This analysis will mainly focus on the multiple ways men and women are portrayed in the textbooks, the curriculum role on gender stereotype enforcement, and teachers' role in such behavior.

² Translated from Albanian:

Gjuha Shqipe, Leximi, Njeriu dhe Natyra, Shoqëria dhe Mjedisi, Edukata Qytetare.

4. Methodology



This project aims to identify the way women and men are represented in children's textbooks. It is also going to determine the reasons that lead to these representations that simultaneously produce gender stereotypes; thus, leading to an analysis of the role that these stereotypes play in children's growth. Moreover, a part of the research focus will highlight teachers and determine how their way of teaching can contribute to gender stereotypes. To do so, the project firstly focuses on secondary data as explained in section 4.1, in a combination with primary data explained in 4.2.

4.1 Secondary data

The secondary data was gathered from credible databases, journals, governmental and non-governmental institutions, such as- RIT Online Library, Balkan Insight, Kosovar Center for Gender Studies, and Kosovo 2.0. These sources were a helpful tool for determining the current state of research in terms of gender stereotypes in general, with a focus on textbooks. Credo Reference, Drawing the Future, UNESCO, US News were some of the sources used for analyzing and finding evidence on worldwide views on gender stereotypes with a focus on textbooks.

4.2 Primary Data

The primary data that was gathered through interviews and mini-experiments that will be further elaborated.

4.2.1 Semi- structured interviews

Nine (9) interviews were conducted with individuals coming from different profiles and backgrounds.

Four (4) interviewees were teachers with a Bachelor's degree in education and work experience of 10 years and above.

One (1) interviewee was a supportive teacher for children with special needs and disabilities. S/he has a Master's degree in Inclusive Education and has been working as a teacher for 10 years.

Two (2) interviewees were researchers and data analyst specialists. They have long working experience on the research project of a similar nature. Besides sharing their work experience and project results, they have also shared personal experiences that will be elaborated further.

One (1) was an expert in the field of Anthropology. They shared insightful information on the topic and provided data on what has been done until now on the field.

One (1) was a psychologist with a background on children education. They provided information on the textbooks' impact on a child's life.

The interviews contained broad questions that allowed the interviewee to expand on different aspects of the research topic. Some of the questions were written in Albanian language and others in English, as some of the interviewees did not have prior knowledge of English language and/or did not feel comfortable speaking in English. The questions (all translated in English) are attached to the Appendices section (Annex A and B) altogether with the consent forms (Annex C under interviewees) given to the interviewees.

4.2.2. Experiments

4.2.2.1 Experiment One

Since this project focuses on textbooks used from the first up to the fifth graders, a small-scale experiment was conducted with pupils from the first to the fifth grade. Specifically, three classes were chosen, first, second and fifth grade respectively in a primary school in Gjilan. The small-scale contained 9 questions that required pupils' opinions. Firstly, the school principal's permission was taken where they signed a consent form (Annex C under school principals), allowing the participation of children in this exercise. Secondly, consent forms (Annex C under Parents section) were sent to children's parents confirming that they allow the participation of their children. Thirdly, an assent form (Annex C under Assent Form section) was attached to the

exercise where children had the opportunity to choose to participate or not participate in the project. The assent form was adapted from “Helping Kids! Promoting Positive Intergroup Relations and Peacebuilding in Divided Societies” (Maloku, Taylor, Dautel, & Rylander, 2019). This experiment consists of 41 participants, with participants from both genders, 20 girls and 21 boys respectively. The experiment included 9 questions that were prepared in consultations with experts. The questions were taken and adapted for this project from “Preschoolers’ Perceptions of Gender Appropriate Toys and their Parents’ Beliefs about Genderized Behaviors: Miscommunication, Mixed Messages, or Hidden Truths?” by Nancy Freeman (Freeman, 2007), attached on the Appendices section (Annex D under Experiment One section).

4.2.2.2 Experiment Two

Another small-scale experiment was done with third and fourth graders. The procedures were the same as per the consent and assent forms; however, the experiment was more interactive. These pupils had to answer five questions that were adapted for the children’s age as attached in the Appendices section (Annex D, under Experiment Two section). These questions were created in consultation with research experts as well as an expert on the field of Gender Studies during the conducted interviews. The total number of participants is 28, where 15 are girls and 13 are boys.

4.3 Limitations

The main limitation regarding this project was reaching out to have meaningful conversations with parents. Another problem was that in the beginning I have noticed that sometimes teachers in an effort to guide students tended to direct them towards specific responses, but this was identified as an issue and addressed with the teachers afterwards. The results of the experiments presented in this project are not representative of Kosovo as they were conducted on a very small scale due to the limited financial resources, however, they portray an important part of reality. The analysis and the results for this project were collected during the COVID-19 pandemic, which made the communication with other planned interviewees limited and on some occasions impossible.



5. Literature Review



This section of the project focuses on the existing research on the topic. Articles written internationally and nationally regarding the topic will be analyzed; thus, making a division on different aspects such as family roles, professions, and so on. Certain points will also be related to laws and regulations as they represent the foundation of curriculum approval and educational processes; thus, this section will be divided into two main parts. The first part will represent information on the research conducted on a global scale; whereas, the second will represent existing evidence in Kosovo. This section is divided into two subsections as there is limited research on the topic nationally. All of the gathered evidence and careful literature revision represent gender stereotypes as more prominent in segments such as family roles, generic nouns, and pronouns, physical appearance as represented in the following sections.

5.2. Global evidence- Gender Stereotypes in Textbooks

5.2.1. Family Roles

Every human being is part or has at least been part and comes from the entity called family. Inside the family, people hold certain positions that are directly or indirectly linked with one another. “Family roles are positions within the family, such as parent, wife/husband, or

son/daughter that describe relations between family members and include expectations for proper behavior” (Roles, 2011). Traditionally, family members played specific roles in a household. For example, women held more nurturing roles, where they had to take care of children, work on household chores and so on. On the other hand, men were expected to financially take care of the family, i.e., work, provide financial support and such. All of these traits were traditionally assigned to specific genders regardless of one’s personal desires and/or capacity.

Regardless of innovation, changes in laws, mentality and such, stereotypes about gender roles are still present. Negative gender stereotypes (e.g., women predominantly presented as being more sensitive) besides being represented in everyday lives, hold a great portion of space in today’s textbooks, internationally as well as nationally. As such, the representation of gender stereotypes of men and women regarding family roles are reflected in the literature used by the children from the first to the fifth grade in elementary schools. These stereotypes are either represented by certain content and/or illustrations depending on the level of education that the book is written for. “Women were portrayed as accommodating, nurturing household workers and girls as passive conformists, while boys and men were engaged in almost all the impressive, noble, exciting and fun things” (Camera, 2016).

Regarding gender stereotypes in family roles, there is also a misbalance between men and women participation inside the household settings. Women are clearly more present inside the house compared to men, and when presented outside the house, women are pictured in supermarkets (Kong, 2001). These problems have evolved and turned into worldwide problems, because of institutional resistance on reforming the curriculum; thus, leading to a low political priority given to the revision of textbooks (Camera, 2016). A similar research in the region (e.g., Montenegro) was conducted, where textbooks were analyzed and different questions were posed. Such questions include, “Did the illustrator present his own romanticized or idealized childhood, somewhere in a small town and in rural areas, where father is the breadwinner, and mother takes care of the family and the household?” (Anima, 2000). The authors find that all of the women portrayed in the textbooks are wearing aprons and always standing or waiting for other family members (Anima, 2000). This example, again confirms a gender stereotypical representation through the illustration of family roles that happens in Montenegro. This example clearly points

out the expectations that are set for men and women, specifically that they should stay at home; whereas, men work for making a living.

All of these factors serve as interference for both genders to get the most out of educational opportunities in their countries. Schools and classrooms can paradoxically aid as a setting for nurturing gender stereotypes (Islam & Asadullah, 2018). Schools can contribute to the enforcement and nurturement of gender stereotypes in different ways. The authors determine that schools may depend on excessively masculine course books for girls' education, adding that, biased content twist women self-portrait and the image of the opposite gender group (Islam & Asadullah, 2018). Using such textbooks altogether with the impact that gender-based preferences of teachers have on children, they might feel inferior and limit the way they see the world. Gender stereotypes in textbooks are extraordinarily hidden and tough to be tackled; thus their identification plays an enormous role on the road to gender equality (Blumberg, 2007). This is primarily a significant issue due to the fact that the content of the textbooks is less researched and plays a less important role in policy debates (Islam & Asadullah, 2018), as a greater portion of space is given to more "serious" issues.

Moreover, teachers are less likely to challenge gender stereotypes represented in books; whilst, children grasp their utmost knowledge from the use of textbooks (about 80 to 90 percent of the time) through passively receiving the taught materials (Islam & Asadullah, 2018). This disagreement or simply well-preserved mentality of gender-based behavior in teachers' internal capacities leads to disregarding important facts. Such facts can be that the first illustrations in the textbooks most of the time represent girls helping their mothers with the household chores, with males never helping in the house, regardless of the setting- rural or urban (Mattu & Hussain). These illustrations reinforce the stereotypes that women belong in the kitchen, whereas men are the breadwinner, making children believe that indisputably members have certain positions and roles in the family and they cannot be changed.

5.2.2. Generic Nouns and Pronouns

Another problem regarding gender stereotypes in educational settings is the way authors refer to children in general. For clarification purposes, the Albanian language has subject pronouns

that are: *I, You, He/She, We, You, and They*.³ *Ata/Ato*, when translated in English, means *They*, and it refers to plural. Specifically, “*ata*” is the Albanian plural for men; whereas, “*ato*” is the Albanian plural for women. This constitutes a problem because authors when referring to children in general use pronouns that refer to men. For example, on the first page of the textbook which in most cases is a welcome letter for the children, the author refers a warm welcome to men. “Now you are important, now you are the main character, you got your first book... (using male gender)” (Anima, 2000). When talking in the plural, which includes girls also, authors adopt male gender pronouns such as, his, theirs, yours (referring to male), while excluding women. The same patterns are prominent in a considerable number of textbooks throughout their education (Anima, 2000). This trend is also present in Kosovo, in almost all of the textbooks. Subjective pronouns referring to men are dominant; whereas, pronouns referring to women are less mentioned in the textbooks (Halimi, 2007). This is also another factor that affects female gender performance in class and indirectly determines their future endeavors.

5.2.3. Physical Appearance

Illustrations are important especially on the primary levels of education, where children get the first ideas about the world. “Illustrations represent carbon copies of society’s cultural stereotypes and share even the responsibility of their continuation in reality” (Abdelhay & Benhaddouche, 2015). Textbooks offer a wide range of illustrations for the core purpose of clearly transmitting the message to the children. As true as it is, illustrations play an important role in shaping children’s perspectives on certain lessons. There are no huge numerical differences regarding school activities for both genders (Anima, 2000). However, boys engage in sports more than girls for 2.5 times, “but there are more girls indulging in hobbies and free time activities, but unfortunately being walking and sitting (the stereotype of female passivity)” (Anima, 2000). This

³ Translated from Albanian:

Unë

Ti

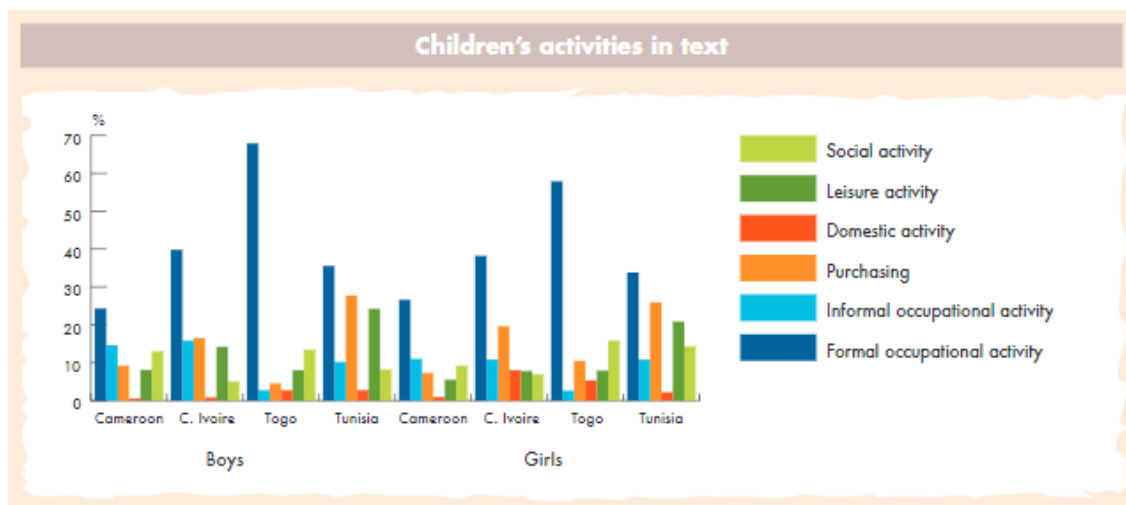
Ai/Ajo

Ne

Ju

Ata/Ato

puts women in a disadvantageous position due to the representation. Especially, when taking into account the fact that the exercises designed for teacher/pupil interaction are tailored in such a way that put girls at a disadvantage (Brugeilles, Cromer, & UNESCO, 2009). This is considered to be a silencer of women because they might feel inferior and demotivated. “This marginalization within textbooks (i.e. biased gender modeling through hidden curriculum) indirectly shapes female students’ acceptance of disempowered roles” (Islam & Asadullah, 2018).



Graph 1. Retrieved from “Promoting Gender Equality through Textbooks” (Brugeilles, Cromer, & UNESCO, 2009).

Based on the information on the above table, differences can be spotted out based on certain activities amongst men and women, as well as different countries. For example, in the table above social activity for boys and girls in textbooks is represented with a light green. Based on the data, boys from Cameroon are more socially active than the girls. Furthermore, “domestic activities are carried out rarely but are still more frequent among girls, except in Tunisia” (Brugeilles, Cromer, & UNESCO, 2009).

Existing research, emphasizes the fact that men and women are not equally represented in textbooks; thus, reinforcing gender stereotypes. Their characteristic is living ordinary lives and presented in textbooks less than men, who have adventurous lives (Abdelhay & Benhaddouche, 2015). All of this is done through a representation of men leading “interesting lives out and about, doing things and making important decisions” (Abdelhay & Benhaddouche, 2015). These representations and portrayals are done through illustrations, which is why they were mentioned

in the first place. Textbooks serve as a tool of defining standards for appropriate feminine and masculine behavior, through the use of language and visuals (Narahara, 1998).

Another example of the physical appearance, namely the hair, outfits, and standards of beauty related to women and men. In other words, girls are most of the time portrayed having long hair; whereas boys having short hair. A study shows that “92% of pictures show girls wearing skirts and bows in their long hairs” (Anima, 2000). Because the societies have given skirts the connotation that they are related only to females, the authors represent girls wearing skirts. When not working in the field, men are usually represented as individuals who wear suits and ties, both at work and at home (Anima, 2000).

5.2.4. Professions

The above-mentioned cases are just a portion of the overall gender stereotypes that are used in children’s textbooks, amongst them being professional representation. The depiction of gender in textbooks affect children’s career choices; while, assigning certain attributes to certain professions. It is considered that “by the age of 7 children’s aspirations appear to be shaped by gender-related stereotypes about who does certain jobs” (Chatfield, 2019). In a way or another, the system of education around the world is shaping a certain way of thinking of children, which restricts their idea of the world.



Figure 1- Retrieved from “Exploring the career aspirations of primary school children from around the world” (Chambers, Rehill, Kashefpakdel, & Percy, 2018).

For example, “boys aspire for traditionally male-dominated professions and girls show a greater interest in nurturing and caring related roles than boys” (Chatfield, 2019). Therefore, the importance of having role models in schools and educational curriculums is important for both, boys and girls for understanding the variety of professions they can have in the future. Children start creating gender stereotypes related to professions from the age of six and giving the opportunity for children to see girls and boys exercising different professions is highly important (Women, 2014).

An experiment was conducted by Drawing the Future amongst kids aged 7 to 11 years old. Based on the analysis and results, the number of boys who wanted to become engineers or scientists was considerably higher as compared to girls (Chambers, Rehill, Kashefpakdel, & Percy, 2018). A parallel was also drawn on traditional roles and professions, which resulted in the explanation of the differences between girls' and boys' choices on becoming a teacher/doctor (Chambers, Rehill, Kashefpakdel, & Percy, 2018). In other words, professions that require more nurturing roles are closely associated with girls, something that characterizes their future professional choices.

Moreover, based on the video created by Drawing the Future, the kids are required to draw the profession mentioned by their teacher. The teacher asks their pupils to draw a firefighter, a surgeon and a pilot- the kids draw male firefighters, surgeons and pilots (Women I. , 2016).



Figure 2- Retrieved from “How Gender Stereotypes in Children’s Books Shape Career Choices” (Chatfield, 2019).

“In 66 drawings of fire-fighters, surgeons, and pilots- 61 were of men and 5 were of women” (Chatfield, 2019). These elaborated examples are undoubtedly enforced by the family traditions and lessons, as well as cultural background. However, the way in which they are portrayed in books plays an important role. The representation of professions either through illustrations or text in the textbooks will create a specific idea on the occupations that men and women should have in their future. There is a positive tendency in recent years to include images of both genders in both roles. However, this is too little compared to what needs to be done and that is why it is important to do research like this to understand where the obstacles are but also outline what the opportunities to do otherwise rest on.

5.3. Existing evidence in Kosovo

5.3.1. A brief introduction to Kosovar Education

The system of education in Kosovo is divided into private and public educational institutions, which offer lessons from the kindergarten levels up until high school. These levels of education are required by the law, which means that they are mandatory for each Kosovo citizen and they start from 6 to 18 years old (RKS, 2011). Therefore, “the mandatory education begins when the child reaches 6 years of age (the minimal age of mandatory education)” (Kosovo T. R., 2019). Thus, making a provision that every child in Kosovo must be sent to school starting from 6 years old and get the necessary education. The main purpose of the laws regulating elementary and secondary schooling is to provide the essential education for children in Kosovo.

5.3.2. Drawing lines with the legal framework

An inseparable part of the educational processes in Kosovo is the relation of such practices to the Law No. 05/L-020, which represents the importance of gender equality in democratic societies and determines ways of coping with issues arising from gender inequality (Kosoves, 2015). The law specifically emphasizes the importance of presenting gender-neutral classrooms settings and textbooks on educational facilities and curriculums. It requires gender equality included in curricula of all levels of education; revision of textbooks from a third party; elimination of negative stereotypes, prejudices, customary practices; equal participation of men and women in professions that are traditionally considered only for women and only for men (Kosoves, 2015). The law specifies the requirements on ways of coping with gender inequality and determines specific areas of education that need to be tackled.

Another relevant law regarding the topic is the law on school materials publication, lessons, and pedagogical documentation. This law aims to set out specific requirements and criteria for companies that deal with the publication of school materials, textbooks, and such. The law itself specifies conditions where the publication of educative materials is allowed.

Furthermore, it sets out requirements from the authors, the ministry, and other stakeholders and clearly represent their duties. It is also stated that textbooks are one of the most important players in the world of education as they serve as a basic tool and source of knowledge. The educational objectives included in the curriculum are only achieved with the appropriate use of textbooks; thus, marking the importance of the content in these educational materials (Kosovo P. I.-G., 2006). Moreover, the law prohibits infringement of human rights and gender inequality in the content of the textbooks⁴ (Kosovo P. I.-G., 2006).

5.3.3. Research conducted nationally

A section of one of the textbooks used in Kosovo was separated and commented on by KultPlus. The story is called “Djali është Djalë” which when translated in English means “The Boy is a Boy”⁵.



Figure 3- Retrieved from “Leximi” (Syla, LEXIMI 4, 2018).

⁴ Translated from Albanian:

“Nuk lejohen tekstet shkollore, mjetet mësimore, lektyrat shkollore dhe dokumentacioni pedagogjik që bëjnë propagandë kundër Kosovës, që cenojnë të drejtat e njeriut dhe barazinë gjinore dhe që nxisin urrejtje politike, nacionale dhe fetare” (Kosovo P. I.-G., 2006).

⁵ Boy in this instance refers to son.

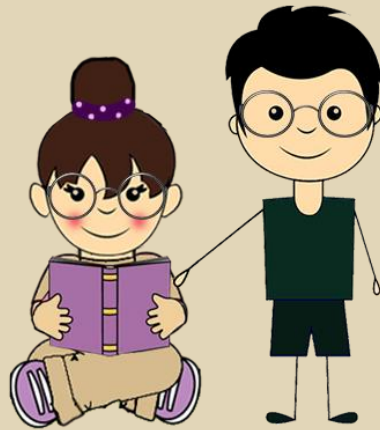
In the story, the daughter explains her everyday struggle in the family, being a “servant” to her brother- something expected by her parents. Gender-based segregation, as well as possession of greater value for boys than girls, are part of this book content (Kultplus, 2019). In this text, the girl is expected to help in the family chores and serve her brother with everything he needs, e.g. serving him food. This is a typical stereotype represented in a textbook where children learn from. The article also represents the long-awaited request of the feminist community in Kosovo that has demanded that textbooks be revised in order to remove all parts that proclaim gender segregation and prejudice (Kultplus, 2019).

Category	Women	Men
Textbooks Authors	26%	74%
Textbooks Illustrations	885/2,292	1,407/2292
School Names	4%	72%
School Staff	8,592/21,698	13,106/21,698

Table 1. Retrieved from “Qendra Kosovare për Studime Gjinore në Kosove” (Halimi, 2007).

Existing research in Kosovo determines that men and women are not equally represented in the educational setting. Out of all educational aspects that the Kosovar Center for Gender Studies analyzed, only 26% were women authors of textbooks; whilst, 74% were men. Moreover, only 4% of schools were named after a woman; whereas, 72% were called after men (Halimi, 2007). The list continues proving that there is an enormous gap between male and female participation in educational setting, which needs to be filled as soon as possible.

6. Results: Research conducted in Kosovo



Based on the interviews that were conducted and experiments steered in primary schools through close interaction with the children following the advice of psychologists, results were classified in categories. The above-mentioned distinction of the literature review section will serve as a guiding point for a representation of the results. As such the results are classified into four categories specifically family roles, generic nouns and pronouns, physical appearance, and professions, which are going to be analyzed separately.

There were 69 responses collected altogether from both of the experiments, with children participants from the first to the fifth grade. The total number of girl respondents is 35; whereas, boy respondents compile 34 responses from both of the experiments. Using the responses gathered from the experiments as well as the information from the interviewees, an analysis of the current state of the textbooks in Kosovo will be done.

6.1. Family Roles

The reason why the analysis of findings begins with family roles is because family is an entity in which individuals take their first steps. On the question of whether one is able to identify the first signs of stereotypical behavior amongst children, one of the interviewees states that children come prepared with certain ideas to school (Interview, 2019). Traditions within the Kosovar family have a tendency to giving more space to males rather than females; regardless of the issue being taken into account (Interview, 2019). In addition, textbooks used in schools are a push factor on enforcement of gender stereotypes, as they form the ideas of wrong and right. Children start forming their own ideas in schools, where they start determining their rights and

privileges (Interview, 2019). An important factor in forming these ideas is undoubtedly the curriculum that is used in schools. One of the interviewees determines that the most important aspect of education is the way in which men and women are represented in textbooks, regardless of the policies that are in place (Interview, 2019). As such, family roles as explained above are a set of expectations from family members that most of the time represent gender-stereotypical behavior. In the following of this section are presented some findings from the textbooks which are related to the aspect of gender stereotypes about family roles.



Figure 4- Retrieved from “Abetare” (Gjokutaj, Krasniqi, Rrokaj, & Pozhegu, 2012).

The image in Figure 4 was found in “Abetare” which strengthens the gender bias that refers to women as being more caring and nurturing, i.e. homemakers. “Abetare” is one of the most important books in elementary education (first graders), as it is used for learning the alphabet of the Albanian Language and one of the first books a child encounters in their lives- more on “Abetare” can be found on the sections below. According to an Interviewee, today’s textbooks work on a system of representation that is based on a so-called traditional division of gender roles

or more conservative division of roles, reflected in household settings (Interview, 2019). It is traditionally expected that women are more prone to taking care of the household chores.

Another interviewee shared an unforgettable experience during an exercise that had to be done in class, and pupils were asked the question, ‘Do you like the food your father cooks better or the mother’s?’ The Interviewee states that the answers they got were different from pupil to pupil; however, the points that the children made, “they always made relations to textbooks and illustrations” (Interview, 2019). They also had written down one of the answers and showed it during the interview.

*“Teacher, do you not already know that Mothers cook and Fathers wait for the food? You can see it in Abetare *finds the page*, see? It is right here! Mom is serving food, and dad as a boss he is, he is waiting for food” (Interview, 2019).*



Figure 5- The child was referring to this illustration. Retrieved from “Abetare” (Gjokutaj, Krasniqi, Rrokaj, & Pozhegu, 2012)

These are simply some of the main stereotypes that the textbooks in Kosovo create in terms of the family roles that are set up in the family throughout a long tradition.



Figure 6- Retrieved from “Abetare” (Gjokutaj, Krasniqi, Rrokaj, & Pozhegu, 2012).

Further, Figure 6 depicts one of the many examples where women are represented as sending their children to doctor’s appointments, schools, buying food, and so on. According to one of the interviewees, there is no need whatsoever to include just one of the parents in sending the kids to schools or doctor’s appointments. The illustrations as hard as they might be to make, the authors can require the representation of both parents (Interview, 2019). This does not only lead to representation and enforcement of gender biases but also inferiority- a child who does not have one of their parents might feel inferior (Interview, 2019).

Anëtarët e familjes kryejnë shumë pune në shtëpi. Ata kujdesen për njëri-tjetrin, për pajisjet shtëpiake, për ushqimin, për argëtimin dhe çlodhjen. Një ditë në familje është e lidhur me shumë veprimtari që kryejnë anëtarët e saj.

Nëna merret me punët e shtëpisë, babai po punon kopshtin, vëllai është duke mësuar, motra duke parë TV, gjyshja duke thurur triko, gjyshi duke lexuar gazetën. Ju uleni për të drekuar në tryezë dhe nuk harroni të tregoni gjërat që ju kanë bërë përshtypje gjatë ditës. Ju dëgjoni njëri-tjetrin dhe ndiheni të gëzuar që keni një familje që ju do dhe ju respekton.

Figure 7- Retrieved from “Edukata Qytetare” (Mato & Shatri, 2017).

Another example is the lesson “In the Family” where a description of family members and their way of spending time is depicted. This example was found in the textbook called “Civic Education”, which enforces the stereotype of family roles divided between males and females. The story aims to explain the importance of family and its members for a prosperous life. However, the story makes a distinction by representing certain information in regards to the family members. It says that the mother takes care of the house chores; whereas the father takes care of the garden. This story makes a clear division of who should perform certain household chores and divides them among family members. This serves to strengthen the idea which affects the development of children’s thinking in the future by showing them what jobs are expected to be performed by them and which are not.

6.2. Generic Nouns and Pronouns

The topic of first-ness is one of the hardest to be tackled. Individuals unconsciously tend to say words together, especially those that go along well, e.g. mac and cheese. However, the first example can be boys and girls, which makes generic nouns and pronouns in textbooks an inseparable example of gender biases.

Box.1:

“I remember as a kid, I used to think that the first name that appeared on everything had more power or knowledge, such as male and females, or boyfriends and girlfriends”.

-Derived from personal interviews

“I always felt more powerful when my parents took me as an example, regardless of how often they took my brother as an example”

-Derived from personal interviews

“I always say you and them in class, while completely removing the use of he/she while teaching. I think that it is the only way to include all of my pupils in class activities”

-Derived from personal interviews

A representation of examples from textbooks will be shown in the below section regarding the generic nouns and pronouns, as well as the impact that they have on children.

6.2.1 Loopholes in the law

The reason why this part starts with elaboration and finding issues within the law is because everyday lives and encounters are guided by law and a small breach might lead to several issues. Relating to the above-mentioned law on elementary and secondary education, it can be seen that the language used is not inclusive to all genders. For example, the purpose of the law on pre-university education in the Republic of Kosovo is, “developing the personality, talent, mental and physical ability of the child up to his full potential” (RKS, 2011).⁶ The law must not in any way represent favoritism towards a specific gender; instead, it must protect all genders and their education equally even in the writing processes. In this case, the gender pronoun “*tij*” which in English is translated “his” represents a bias towards men, disregarding women.

6.2.2 Drawing lines with textbooks

The representation of men as being more powerful and authoritative than women through textbooks does not only come within the illustrations. It is also a result of the language and the speech used; hence, creating and enforcing well-trodden gender stereotypes.

A clear example is a textbook used by the third graders called “Gjuha Shqipe”, which teaches children grammar of Albanian language through the use of stories, poetry, and so on. The book opens its doors to the next generation of third graders, by making a clear distinction between genders, i.e., it starts by welcoming boys in schools, neglecting girl participation. The story is called “A Pupil’s Diary” and talks about a young boy who is about to start his third year of primary school and his parents advise him on how to behave in the school settings (Beci, Gjuha Shqipe- 3, 2014). When asking the specific question of whether the teachers saw this as a problematic issue, four out of five stated that they saw this representation as a very challenging concern. A third-grade teacher states that the moment they start reading this story, one can see the sadness in the girls’ side. They emphasize the inferiority they feel while reading this story because of the representation.

The family structure is already familiar to children from the first grade, the authors can write a story about a brother and a sister going to school and getting advice from their parents

⁶ “2.1. Zhvillimi i personalitetit, talentit dhe aftësisë mendore e fizike të nxënësit deri në potencialin e tij të plotë” (RKS, 2011).

(Interview, 2019). On the other hand, one of the teachers did not consider this story as rather problematic, as they believe that the family plays an important role in the way children see education. They state that you can put as many stories; as many pictures, but the real lesson comes from the family (Interview, 2019). When asked whether they understand or have been at least in one training that emphasizes the importance of gender-neutral classroom setting, four out of five teachers said that they have never been part of such training; whereas, one of them said that they have attended a training on gender inclusivity as they were interested in learning how to work with all of their pupils, without excluding anyone.

In another example from the book called “Edukata Qytetare” which when translated means Civic Education, one topic is about the arrangement of living spaces in Albanian houses/families and it explains the way in which in the past men and women did not share their spaces because men stayed in special rooms, which in the Albanian language are called *oda*. However, now not only the style of construction but also the way of family planning and organization has made the room unnecessary. In the new houses, a living room is built, where men and women reside (Bahtiri & Dukagjini). All this does not explain the reason for this kind of change, that is, it gives space for interpretations. Fifth grade pupils need to be educated in the spirit of development, and then understand why these changes have occurred. They should not ingrain the idea that it is the right thing to do if one uses derogatory language for portraying where women lived when compared to men (Interview, 2019).

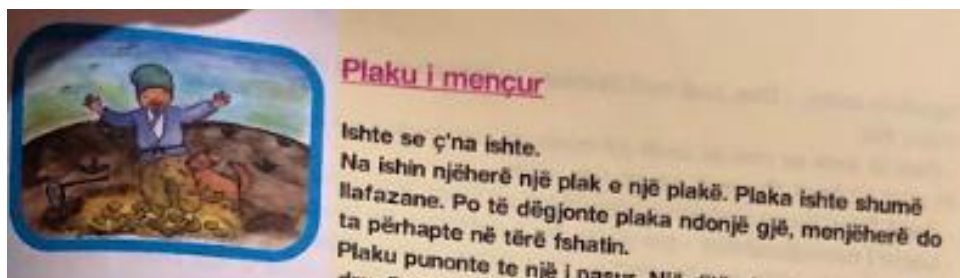


Figure 8- Retrieved from “Gjuha Shqipe” (Beci, Gjuha Shqipe- 4).

The other story called “Plaku i mençur” or “The Wise Old Man”, is about an old couple that has been married for quite a long time. The problem with this fairytale is that in here, the old man is represented as a smart person, who finds the gold; whereas, the woman is represented as

someone who talks a lot. Furthermore, the old man is also represented as someone who not only finds the gold but also protects it from his wife who cannot keep a word to herself. Thus, reinforcing the stereotype that men are smarter than women and that women talk a lot. This can be spotted from the title of the fairytale, where the author decided to name it “The wise old man”, and in the first sentence, the first individual to be mentioned is the old man. Men are depicted as being more authoritative where they speak based on knowledge, positions of power; whereas, women as quiet, out of control, and/or too emotional whenever they speak (Interview, 2019).

The interviewees agreed that in most cases the language that is used when referring to women is derogatory. For example, the *law on gender equality* as well as the *law on school materials publication, lessons and pedagogical documentation* clearly set out rules that must be respected and actions from which individuals must refrain from. The curriculum is created by education experts who set up certain requirements from the authors. These requirements represent what is prerequisite from the authors, i.e., topics that need to be elaborated. However, authors have biases too and simply do not agree with the set requirements; thus, refraining from these specifications, i.e. when they talk about family, they only take into account the traditional family and do not include the LGBTQ+ community (Interview, 2019). To remedy these problems, one of the experts interviewed stated that the best option would be to use “*A tyre*” when referring to genders in general, which in English means “them” and does not specify any gender whatsoever (Interview, 2019). The inclusion of genders is highly important, especially in the young generations such as first to fifth graders where they take their first steps of life.



Figure 9- Retrieved from “Abetare” (Gjokutaj, Krasniqi, Rrokaj, & Pozhegu, 2012).

6.3 Physical Appearance

When children start their primary education, as mentioned above the first encounter they have with a book is “Abetare”. Through interactive exercises, teachers teach their first graders the alphabet of the Albanian language. The alphabet has 36 letters, where 7 of them are vowels and 29 are consonants. The latest edition of “Abetare” was published in April 2012 with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of Kosovo, and the Ministry of Education and Science of Albania. Thus, the same book is used by both states for the purpose of creating a stronger bond between the two. “Abetare” encompasses several simple, short stories, followed by illustrations that provide information to the children. The cover page of the Abetare presents a boy and a girl, where one is wearing trousers and a shirt, and the other one is wearing a skirt and a shirt, respectively. One of the interviewees states that children are able to immediately identify who is a girl and who is a boy on a story based on the illustrations.

Drawing	Girls	Boys
Skirt	20	0
Dress	8	0
Pants	0	25
Shorts	0	3

Table 2: “Drawing a girl and a boy”.

During the experiment 2 (grades 3 and 4), the children were asked to draw a girl and a boy. In this part, 100% of children or 28 of them drew a girl wearing either a skirt or a dress, eating or singing with a bow on their hair; whereas, the boy was represented as either wearing pants or sport shorts with a ball on their arms or close to their feet with short hair. When asked why they chose to draw skirts on girls and pants on boys, 20 of them stated that it is because they have seen it in all of the books they have read. On the other hand, 8 of them said that they drew girls and boys in that way because according to them, it is the only way of differentiating between men and women (II, 2019). Moreover, girls are more prone to pink; whereas boys are more prone to blue (Interview, 2019).

Gender	Girls	Boys
Pink	13	0
Blue	0	13
Both	2	0

Table 3: “Do you like pink or blue better?”

On the question of whether the children like pink or blue better, 13 out of 15 girls said that they liked pink better; whereas, 2 of them said that they link both of the colors. On the other hand, 100% or 13 out of 13 boys said that they like blue better. When asked why, many interesting answers were gathered, as represented below.

Box. 2:

“I love blue because I love the sky! It reminds me that my dad looks up from heaven... The problem is that whenever I wear blue, my classmates laugh. I feel ashamed... I mean, I know girls wear pink and boys blue, but there must be exceptions for those for whom blue represents something”

-Girl (grade 3-4) Response derived from experiment II

“Pink is for girls, this is a worldwide known fact!”

-Boy (grade 3-4) Response derived from experiment II

“Why? Of course that I love pink! Have you ever seen a girl wearing blue that does look good in blue?”

-Girl (grade 3-4) Response derived from experiment II

*“Blue is manly! I would look like an exact girl in pink, then I would have to ask my mom whether she can buy me a dress *laughs*”*

-Boy (grade 3-4) Response derived from experiment II

Another problem that is related to textbooks and gender representation is that women are often depicted as more sensitive and apologetic individuals than men. All of these factors affect the ways in which men and women enter all kinds of social relationships (Interview, 2019). This becomes something internalized and might be afterward considered as completely normal. For example, women tend to say phrases such as “maybe I am not right, but...” as if they are saying or doing something wrong. There is always an excuse they use for having an opinion; thus, paving the way for men to state opinions as facts and/or claim more space that goes one-on-one with characters (Interview, 2019). A story taken from the book “Albanian Language”⁷ called “A class’ event”⁸ talks about a young boy being a new-comer in class. In this story, male personalities are represented as evil, heartless and mean; whereas, the female is recognized as the girl with long hair and white ribbon, but her name is not mentioned anywhere in the text. However, she is represented as calm, kind and a loving heart. This representation reflects the stereotype of girls being quiet and calm; whereas, boys as being more aggressive and bullies. The visuals and the specific linguistic discourse used in books do not only shape children’s characters but they also set up expectations and norms applicable to boys and girls.

6.4 Professions

Professional choices among men and women have been amongst the most heated debates all around the world, with no exceptions for Kosovo. It is so because of the traditional professions set up for specific genders. Gender stereotypes are not the only problems concerning the textbooks that are used in Kosovo’s educational system. Territorial, historical, and geographical facts also play an important role in the issues encompassing the curriculums. The Ministry of Education promised that they would appoint a certain commission that would take a detailed look at the textbooks (BIRN, 2010). In some of the textbooks that Kosovo schools use for educational purposes, it is mentioned that the content was reviewed by a certain commission which for ethical purposes will not be mentioned in this project. Even though the commission has done a good job on the identification of the gender stereotypes in the textbooks, there remains a lot of work that needs to be done.

Original names in Albanian

⁷ “Gjuha Shqipe”

⁸ “Një ndodhi në klasë”

From the in-class experiment, it was proven that girls are more prone to choosing the profession of a teacher than boy.

Gender	Boys	Girls
Yes	9	19
No	12	1

Table 4: “I want to be a teacher when I grow up”

19 out of 20 girls said that they want to be teachers when they grow up; whereas, 12 out of 21 boys said that they do not want to be teachers in the future. Words such as teachers are most of the time associated with females. An expert determines that the word teacher itself does not refer to one gender, however, the assumption in one’s mind is that they think of the teacher as a woman teacher (Interview, 2019). The problem gets even more problematic when the textbooks refer to something but the illustrations point out something else, meaning that the opinions clash.



Figure 10- Retrieved from “Shoqeria dhe Mjedisi” (Nixha, Stavileci, & Lutaj, 2019).

This picture represents the 7th of March as a historical date for Kosovo and Albania. This date symbolizes teacher's day because on the 7th of March, 1887 the first school in Korçë, Albania was opened. The first teacher in this school was Pandeli Sotiri, who symbolizes a victory for Kosovars and Albanians. In this picture is written "7 Marsi- Dita e Mësuesit", which translated in English means "7th of March- Teacher's Day". "Mësuesit" in Albanian refers to male-teachers, as such causing a discrepancy between the message being transmitted and the illustration following the message. In the picture, it can be seen as a female-teacher that enforces the gender stereotype of female-teachers.

The connotation given to the noun teacher as being a female teacher is a reflection of reality. According to one of the interviewees, "elementary schools' staff is comprised of almost 100% female teachers... First to fifth grade is almost 100% female teachers" (Interview, 2019). They further continue by making relations with the level of education and professional capabilities as seen by society. They state that "the higher up you go the more men than women teachers can be found... lastly, once in university level, the numbers are even more skewed" (Interview, 2019). This represents a gendered division of labor in terms of education.



Figure 11- Retrieved from "Abetare"

(Gjokutaj, Krasniqi, Rrokaj, & Pozhegu, 2012).

Figure 11 represents another example of gender biases in textbooks based on professions. This is an illustration in Abetare and it is used for teaching letter 'Rr', which is the 25th letter in the Albanian language alphabet. The picture represents a female seamstress, who is doing her job.

Men having more power and authority is also present in professions. These traits derive from social upbringing, where the women feel less powerful to state their own opinions because they were taught so throughout the course of life. One of the interviewees shares their personal experience stating

“I often get angry by this never-ending patriarchy that constantly enforces gender stereotypes. I find myself being the organizer of the event and inviting different people to participate. On the day of the event, there is always a man referring to me as “the woman”, without mentioning my name”

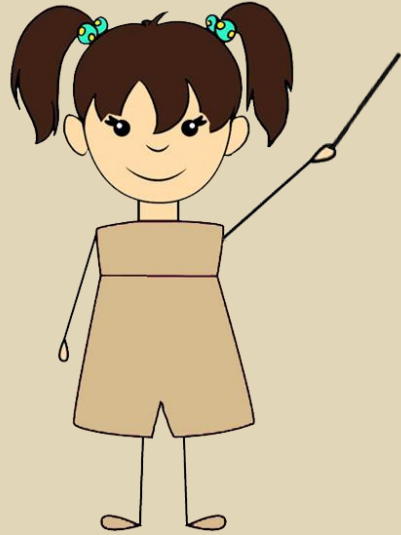


Figure 12- Retrieved from “Leximi” (Syla, Leximi 4, 2018).

Their anger gets more intense when they start talking with their daughter and she starts telling them that they learned in-class a new story called “Djali është djalë” (Interview, 2019).

The main reason the interviewee gets angry is that they constantly try to teach their children that people are equal, in terms of professions, family roles, and so on. It takes their whole life to educate their children in such a way, for a textbook to put down everything that they have taught to their children. “My children see their teacher as another mother; and the textbooks as the number one thing that knows everything”- states another interviewee (Interview, 2019). This represents a reality where pupils get the first steps that follow them for the rest of their lives, whilst deepening the problem even more.

7. Recommendations



A set of recommendations will be given below in order to tackle the signs of patriarchy which have managed to spread into educational premises. Firstly a couple of recommendations that can be done and require a shorter period of time will be proposed, and then the alternatives that require longer to be implemented will be presented.

7.1 Gender-neutral classrooms trainings

The government of Kosovo in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation should introduce various training for Kosovo's teachers with the aim of promoting gender-neutral classroom settings. This study has shown how teachers, regardless of their work experience are not yet very familiar with the importance of promoting a gender-neutral classroom setting or at least have not been in more than 2 trainings- if not any, regarding these topics. The introduction of such training would diminish certain ideas that otherwise harm the future of the children.

7.2. Tweaking content

This alternative proposes that stories that represent favoritism or a set of expectations for men and/or women must be immediately removed. While reading the textbooks and conducting research, I have been the witness of numerous stories that set a certain set of expectations for

people. Hence, opening a wider gap of gender inequality and instability, while creating certain ideas into the children's minds. Therefore, this recommendation suggests that a commission takes care on finding these stories and removing them immediately. Hence, the ministry's role in the content of textbooks increases and does not only include the authors.

7.3. Law reform

This alternative requires close cooperation between the Ministry of Education and individuals that are continuously interacting with textbooks used in schools, e.g. teachers. In this way, besides specifying certain requirements, the government will be able to represent possible sanctions. These sanctions would be designed in such a way that they can be applied in case the requirements are not met.

7.4. Creating a commission

Appointing a commission is not an easy task, as the government and the Ministry need to examine the right experts that would help in diminishing gender stereotypes in books. In this way, the commission should be able to divide the tasks between members and work on them. These tasks would be divided as follows: people who tweak the visuals- instead of a girl listening to music, or a boy playing football, there can be a boy and a girl together playing football or listening to music; using all-inclusive pronouns- instead of using "ai" which means "he", the authors can use "ai/ajo" which means "he/she", in this way they include both, girls and boys. The commission must include active members of the civil society in the field of gender equality/ or other relevant fields. In Kosovo, the civil society has served as the best watch dog and perpetually offered meaningful recommendations for change. So, having a cross-government collaboration and ensuring that the process of revision includes experts in the field who work outside the ministry is crucial.



8. Conclusion



All in all, this study shows that gender stereotypes hold a great portion of space in school textbooks. These stereotypes include various areas which in this study are divided into 4 sections, namely family roles, generic nouns and pronouns, physical appearance, and professions. An addition to the problems that come from stereotypes is the lack of training on gender-neutral classroom settings offered to teachers and the lack of policy attention given to curriculum reforms. The small scale studies conducted with children in classrooms, confirm gender based distinction of professional choices; color choices, i.e. pink and/or blue; roles within the family; outfit representation, and so on. Experts on the field determine that all of these factors lead to gender based segregation, which ultimately leads to patriarchal activity enforcement starting from primary education. Growing children in such environment has a great impact in their future endeavors as well as the decisions they make. The results made it possible to make relations and draw lines between the results and textbooks, to be able to clearly determine the root causes. There is a lot of work that needs to be done by the institutions in Kosovo in order to refrain completely from gender biases in general, especially in the textbooks. Children take their first steps of education in the schools and get their first ideas of the world from the textbooks. Therefore, the responsibility of providing pupils with a prosperous educational environment for intellectual and personal growth is on each and every one of us. Therefore, it is important for each of us to take care of the environment in which children are taking their first steps in life. What we have now, is the future of those who will build Kosovo for the upcoming generations; thus, the responsibility of leaving a patriarchal society behind and fill it with prosperity and inclusion is undeniably, ours!

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10. Appendices

10.1 Annex A- Teacher's Questions

1. Are you aware of the term gender neutral classroom setting?
2. Have you ever been part of any training for these type of classes?
3. How much do you think books and materials, such as Albanian Language; which are used for teaching and learning contribute to the strengthening of gender stereotypes?
4. How much does the portrayal of women and men in books affect the self-confidence that students build for the future?
5. Based on your experience, how much do you think the content of textbooks has changed for the better or for the worse in enforcing gender stereotypical behavior?
6. In this aspect, what is your personal experience? Can you identify the beliefs from the age of 7-8 years in terms of gender stereotypes in girls and boys?
7. If yes, what is your approach?

10.2 Annex B- Interviewees Questions

10.2.1- A

1. Have you ever had any specific research on textbook analysis and how women and men are portrayed in these books?
2. If so, what conclusions did you find?
3. If not, what similar gender-related research have you conducted?
4. As a mother, what experiences would you have singled out regarding gender stereotypes?
5. What are your personal thoughts about gender stereotypes?

10.2.2- B

1. What are some of the pronouns to refer to people in general without using him/her; he/she?
2. How does the representation of gender roles in children textbooks from a young age (6-7 years to 10-11 years) shape the characters and the way they think in the future?
3. How does authors' preferences on a certain gender affect the message they try to convey to the pupils?
4. How do the picture (photographs) representation of women/men affect the way children think of certain professions?
5. How did today's literature change the way it represents women and men from before?

10.3 Annex C- Consent Forms

10.3.1 Interviewees

Consent Form

Project Title: "Gender Based Social Expectations: An Analysis of the Textbooks from 1-5 grade"

Researcher's Name: Gerta Ymeri

Project Mentor: Dr. Venera Demukaj

Address: RIT Kosova / AUK, Dr. Shpetim Robaj, Prishtina, Kosovo, 10000

Opening

You are holding this consent form in your hands because you are invited to participate in a research project as part of the thesis topic for the completion of Bachelor studies. This project aims to analyze the presentation of women and men in textbooks and the impact that these books have on children development. This project seeks to open new avenues for decision-making by the Government of Kosovo on the approval of textbooks used under the curriculum; the introduction of new policies, as well as the creation of gender-neutral spaces in order to achieve better results for both genders and reduce discrimination on the basis of gender.

Preliminary study requirements

This study begins with your consent, where you agree to participate in this project and answer questions designed specifically for you. At the bottom of the form you may find the space provided where you need to put the signature. Placing the signature determines your desire to participate in this project.

What does this study include?

If you agree to be interviewed, you must first answer demographic questions (name, surname, gender, profession). Then the question-answer session begins, where you can add information that you deem necessary for this project.

Confidentiality

This form, the interview as well as the information provided will be anonymous. The completed documents as well as the answers given will not be presented in any way together with your name or any identifying information.

Your rights as a participant

Participation in this study is conducted on a voluntary basis; where you can refuse to participate. Your decision to participate or not to participate will not have any impact on your life. If you decide not to participate in this study, you will not suffer any penalties and it will not have any impact in our institution.

Contact

If you have any other questions regarding this research project or any concerns, you can contact Gerta Ymeri at gxy4992@g.rit.edu or the project mentor, Dr. Venera Demukaj at vdemukaj@auk.org.

If you agree to participate in this research project, please sign your name below.

I, _____, want to participate in this study.

(Sign here)

(Date)

10.3.2 School Principals

Consent Form

Project Title: "Gender Based Social Expectations: An Analysis of the Textbooks from 1-5 grade"

Researcher's Name: Gerta Ymeri

Project Mentor: Dr. Venera Demukaj

Address: RIT Kosova / AUK, Dr. Shpetim Robaj, Prishtina, Kosovo, 10000

Opening

You are holding this consent form in your hands because you and the school you lead are invited to participate in a research project as part of the thesis topic for the completion of Bachelor studies. This project aims to analyze the presentation of women and men in textbooks and the impact that these books have on children development. This project seeks to open new avenues for decision-making by the Government of Kosovo on the approval of textbooks used under the curriculum; the introduction of new policies, as well as the creation of gender-neutral spaces in order to achieve better results for both genders and reduce discrimination on the basis of gender.

Preliminary study requirements

This study first requires your consent, where you allow Gerta Ymeri to seek permission from the school teachers and then the students' parents to organize some exercises which are in the form of tests in which students' answers are required. If you agree to the school you represent to participate in this study, you must put your signature below.

Confidentiality

The data collected from the interviews with your staff as well as the children of this institution are absolutely confidential and will be stored with full accuracy. Completed documents as well as answers provided will not be presented in any way along with your name, your staff, students or any other identifying information.

Your rights as a participant

Participation in this study is conducted on a voluntary basis; where you, your staff as well as parents may refuse to attend. Your decision to participate or not to participate will not have any

impact on your life. If you decide not to participate in this study, you will not suffer any penalties and will not have any impact in our institution.

Contact

If you have any other questions regarding this research project or have any concerns, you can contact Gerta Ymeri at gxy4992@g.rit.edu or the project mentor, Dr. Venera Demukaj at vdemukaj@auk.org.

If you agree to participate in this research project, please sign your name below.

I, _____, approve the participation of the staff and students of the school I lead in this research project, only and only when the parents have agreed with the participation of their children in this project.

(Sign here)

(Date)

10.3.3 Parents

Consent Form

Project Title: "Gender Based Social Expectations: An Analysis of the Textbooks from 1-5 grade"

Researcher's Name: Gerta Ymeri

Project Mentor: Dr. Venera Demukaj

Address: RIT Kosova / AUK, Dr. Shpetim Robaj, Prishtina, Kosovo, 10000

Opening

You are holding this consent form in your hands because your child is a first to fifth grader and is invited to take part in a research project. This project aims to analyze the presentation of women and men in textbooks and the impact that these books have on children development. This project seeks to open new avenues for decision-making by the Government of Kosovo on the approval of textbooks which are used according to the curriculum; the introduction of new policies, as well as the creation of gender-neutral spaces in order to achieve better results for both women and men, and reduce discrimination on the basis of gender.

Preliminary study requirements

This study begins with your consent, where you agree that your child can be part of this study. Then, your child should be willing to participate in this project. At the end of the form, please find the space where you and your child should sign, which proves your child's desire to be part of this study.

What does this study include?

If you agree that your child should take part in this study, the child should first fill in the demographic questions (name, surname, gender). Then your child will complete some questions such as "group the colors"; "group professions". These exercises take no more than 30 minutes, and will take place within the classroom where the teacher will be present at all times.

Confidentiality

This form, questionnaires as well as exercises will be anonymous. The documents completed by you and your children will not be presented in any way along with your name or any other identifying information.

Your Rights as a Participant

Participation in this study is on a voluntary basis; where you can refuse to participate. Your decision to participate or not will have no bearing on your life or that of your child. If you decide not to participate in this study, you will not suffer any kind of penalty or punishment and will not have any impact in our institution.

Please tick all boxes

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information provided by the researcher, Gerta Ymeri for her senior project.
2. I understand that the participation of my child is voluntary and I am free to withdraw from this decision at any time without giving any reason, and no penalty can be imposed on me.
3. I understand that this study aims to analyze the presentation of gender stereotypes in textbooks from first to fifth grade, as well as their impact on the development of children in these conditions. As such, I agree that my child can participate in this study where the researcher, Gerta Ymeri has the right to ask questions and present examples where answers from my child are required.
4. I completely agree that my child, a minor, can participate in this study.

(Name and Surname)

(Date)

(Signature)

Child Assent Form

[TO BE COMPLETED BY THE RESEARCHER]

Child Name: _____

Researcher working with the child: _____

[TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CHILD]

My name is:

⁹ Retrieved from (Maloku, Taylor, Dautel, & Rylander, 2019).

Please tick the box (✓) in one of the boxes:

I **would like** to participate in the games today:



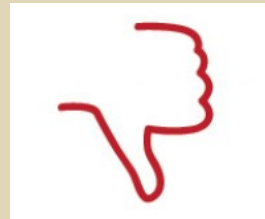
I **do not** want to participate in games today:



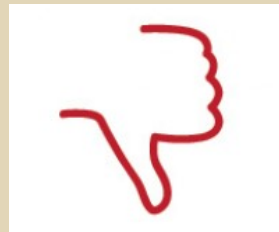
10.4 Annex D- Children Questions

10.4.1 Experiment one

1. Only boys can play football.



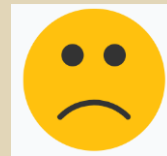
2. Only girls play with dolls.



3. Only girls can become nurses.



Agree



Disagree

4. I like to buy dolls and play with them.



Never



Rarely



On Average



Often



Always

5. Math is for boys.



Agree



Disagree

6. Car games are for boys only.

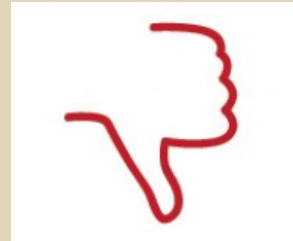


Agree

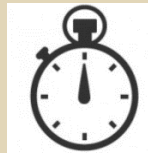


Disagree

7. Only boys can become soldiers.



9. I want to be a teacher when I grow up.



I do not want to be a teacher



I want to be a teacher

10. I want to be a soldier when I grow up.



I do not want to be a soldier when I grow up



I want to be a soldier when I grow up

This experiment was adapted from “*Preschoolers’ Perceptions of Gender Appropriate Toys and their Parents’ Beliefs about Genderized Behaviors: Miscommunication, Mixed Messages, or Hidden Truths?*” (Freeman, 2007).

10.4.2 Experiment two

1. Could you please draw a girl and a boy?
2. Could you please draw a nurse?
3. Could you please draw a soldier?
4. What are your favorite colors?
5. Do you like pink or blue better?

These questions were designed with the help of a psychologist and research specialists based on the experiment made by Drawing the Future.